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BELGIUM Henri FAYAT

Minister of Foreign Trade

A distinguished lawyer, professor and politician, Henri Fayat became Minister of Foreign Trade for the second time in June 1968. He had previously held the portfolio from May 1957 until July 1958. [redacted] he has held several other responsible government posts, including the following: Deputy Minister for Foreign Trade (1961), and Minister-Secretary of State for European Affairs (1965-66).

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One of the foremost experts on European affairs and regarded as a "European," Fayat is particularly interested in European integration and has been responsible for his country's policy on EEC questions. He also has a special interest in NATO affairs, which he follows closely. He has been one of the leading champions of the view that NATO should become something more than a military alliance. He served as Honorary Treasurer of the NATO Parliamentarians' Conference from 1959 until 1961.

A Flemish member of the Socialist Party (PSB), Fayat was first elected to the Chamber of Representatives in 1946. He is recognized as one of his party's leading parliamentarians and has a reputation for being one of the few Socialist experts on the Belgian Congo. He has served on several important Chamber committees, notably Foreign Affairs, Foreign Commerce and the Colonies, as well as on special commissions on the constitutional powers of the King, the European Defense Community, and the revision of the Belgian Constitution. In addition to his political activities, he is professor extraordinaire on the Faculty of Law at the Free University of Brussels.

[redacted] He is a frequent visitor to the United States. In the summer of 1956, he toured this country on a NATO leader grant and was very enthusiastic about his experience, especially about discovering the "outlook of America beyond the Eastern seaboard." He returned to the US on an economic mission in 1957 in his capacity

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Henri FAYAT (Cont'd)

as Minister of Foreign Trade, and was here again in the fall of 1966 on a private visit. On his most recent visit to Washington, in May 1969, he met with Secretary of Commerce Maurice Stans.

Early Life and Career

Henri Fayat was born in Molenbeek-Saint-Jean on 28 June 1908. After receiving his doctor of laws degree from the University of Brussels in 1933, he was a fellow at the same university for 2 years. Admitted to the Brussels bar in 1935, he was engaged as a legal adviser in the Ministry of Public Works in 1937. From 1940 until 1942, he was in France assisting escaping Belgians. Joining the Belgian Government-in-Exile in Great Britain in 1942, Fayat became legal attaché in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London, then chef de cabinet to the Minister of Interior. After serving as chef de cabinet to the "deputy prime minister" in the post-liberation Pierlot Cabinet in Brussels, he was elected a deputy to the Chamber of Representatives.

Travel

In addition to attending numerous international conferences Fayat has traveled widely throughout the world, including Eastern Europe, Africa and the Far East. He was a delegate to the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1954 and 1956, replacing Guy Mollet as President of the Socialist Group in the Assembly in the latter year. In February 1969 Fayat accompanied Prince Albert on a tour of the Congo. In September 1970 he attended Belgium Day at the Chemicals 1970 Fair in Moscow, prior to taking part in negotiations on a Benelux-USSR commercial agreement.

Personal Data

One Belgian columnist has described the tall, grey haired, blue eyed Fayat as "the glamour boy of European flamingantism."

[redacted] He is married but has been separated from his wife since 1957. He has one son. Fayat speaks excellent English, French and German. He prefers to speak Flemish when addressing the Chamber of Deputies and prefers to speak English with US officials.

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